

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8001
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IS, PLO
SUBJECT: ISRAELI REACTION TO PLO DECISION TO
REJECT SC RESOLUTION 242

1. SUMMARY: THE PLO'S DECISION TO REJECT SC RESOLUTION
242 RECEIVED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN ISRAELI PRESS ON AUGUST
28 AND 29. FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN EXPRESSED SATISFACTION
AT THE DECISION BUT ADDED THAT AMERICAN EFFORTS TO SOFTEN
THE PLO WOULD CONTINUE. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN IS REPORTED
AS SAYING IN ROMANIA THAT "PLO POSITION PROVES OUR POINT."
THE PRESS REGARDS THE DECISION AS A BLOW TO AMERICAN MEDIA-
TION EFFORTS IN THE ME BUT SPECULATES THAT THE U.S.WILL
NOT SUSPEND ITS EFFORTS TO ALTER THE PLO'S POSITION.
IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY COMMENTATORS THAT PRESSURE
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ON ISRAEL TO INCLUDE PLO IN NEGOTIATION WILL BE EASED,
AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING. END SUMMARY.

2. ISRAELI PRESS (AUGUST 29) FRONTPAGES BEGIN'S REACTION
TO PLO DECISION. THE PRIME MINISTER IS QUOTED AS SAYING
THAT HE WOULD STRESS AT HIS MEETING WITH THE ROMANIAN
PRESIDENT THE LATEST PLO DECISION "SINCE IT VINDICATED...

ISRAEL'S FIRM DETERMINATION TO REJECT ALL DEALING WITH THE ORGANIZATION..." BEGIN ADDED THAT "PERHAPS THE DECISION WILL TEACH ELEMENTS IN THE EAST AND WEST WHO EXERT PRESSURE ON US THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAS REMAINED LOYAL TO ITS PLAN TO DESTROY ISRAEL..." (DAVAR).

3. REPORTING ON THE AUGUST 28 CABINET SESSION, DAVAR WRITES THAT DAYAN SAID, "THE LAST WORD HAS NOT BEEN SAID REGARDING THE PLO'S DECISION. WHILE THE REJECTION MAY, AT THIS STAGE, ENABLE ISRAEL TO EXPOSE THE PLO FOR WHAT IT IS, THE TOP ECHELONS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE OF THE OPINION THAT NO SETTLEMENT WITHOUT THE PLO IS POSSIBLE... WHILE A CERTAIN LULL MAY BE EXPECTED, THE GOVERNMENTS OF EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE A U.S. DIALOGUE WITH THE PLO, IN A BID TO PUT THE BLAME ON ISRAEL FOR HAVING PROMPTED WITH ITS POLICY THE RIGIDITY OF ARAFAT AND HIS SUPPORTERS."

4. OPPOSITION LEADER PERES SAID THAT "THE PLO DECISION PROVES THAT THE ORGANIZATION DID NOT CHANGE ITS FACE EVEN FOR THE LIMITED NEED TO ALTER ITS EXTERNAL IMAGE..." PERES STRESSED THE LABOR PARTY POSITION THAT NEGOTIATIONS TO SETTLE THE ME DISPUTE MUST BE HELD WITH JORDAN.

5. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS COMMENT EDITORALLY ON PLO DECISION. DAVAR EDITORIAL STRESSES THAT "IT WOULD BE ERRONEOUS UNCLASSIFIED

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TO THINK THAT THE U.S. WILL BE PERSUADED TO PUT OFF FORMING CONTACTS WITH THE PLO BECAUSE OF ITS REFUSAL TO ACKNOWLEDGE 242. IN FACT, THE INDICATIONS ARE THAT CONTACTS ARE IN THE OFFING...AS FAR AS U.S.PUBLIC OPINION IS CONCERNED, THE PLO AND THE PALESTINIANS ARE GENERALLY BRACKETED TOGETHER AND ISRAEL INFORMATION WILL HAVE A TOUGH JOB COMBATTING THIS IMAGE..."

6. AN AL-HAMISHMAR EDITORIAL EXPRESSES THE VIEW THAT SO LONG AS THE PLO ABIDES BY THE RABAT RESOLUTIONS IT CANNOT CONCEIVABLY BE A PARTNER IN NEGOTIATIONS. "BUT FURTHER EROSION IN WASHINGTON'S ATTITUDE TO THE ISSUE CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY TAKING A PURELY NEGATIVE STAND..." A JERUSALEM POST EDITORIAL STATES THAT THE CRUX OF THE MIDDLE EAST DISPUTE IS NOT THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION BUT "THE ARAB WORLD'S PERSISTENT REFUSAL TO COUNTENANCE ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE IN ITS MIDST. THE POST CONCLUDES THAT "THE PLO'S REJECTION OF 242 SHOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REASSESSMENT OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S ME POLICY AND A RETHINKING OF THE MISTAKEN ASSUMPTIONS ON WHICH IT IS BASED..."

7. UNDER THE HEADLINE "A TIME FOR THREATS", MAARIV EDI-

TORIALIZES THAT "NOW THAT THE PLO COUNCIL HAS REJECTED ALL INDUCEMENTS AND PRESSURES ON IT TO ACCEPT 242, THE ARAB COUNTRIES MAY BE EXPECTED TO CHANGE THEIR POLITICAL TACTICS AND BEGIN WARMING UP THE ATMOSPHERE BEFORE THE UN ASSEMBLY AND THE FOREIGN MINISTERS TALKS IN NEW YORK. THE SYRIAN INFORMATION MINISTER FIRED THE FIRST SHOT IN THAT DIRECTION...THERE IS REASON TO EXPECT SIMILAR STATEMENTS FROM OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES. THE VERBAL THREATS MAY EVEN BE ACCOMPANIED BY SOME DEMONSTRATIVE ACTION TO INTENSIFY AND AUGMENT THE EFFECT OF THE THREATS..."
A YEDIOT EDITORIAL ADOPTS A SIMILAR LINE AND WARNS ISRAELI LEADERS OF ANOTHER "YOM KIPPUR."

8. HAARETZ (ZARAI) CARRIES AN UNUSUALLY STRONG ATTACK ON
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U.S.POLICY REGARDING THE PLO. IT BLAMES THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION FOR CREATING THE EXPECTATIONS THAT THE PLO WAS READY TO MODERATE ITS POSITION AND FOR HAVING OFFERED THE PLO VARIOUS FORMULAS TO INDUCE THAT ORGANIZATION TO ACCEPT 242. "WASHINGTON EXPECTED THE PLO TO JUMP AT THE OPPORTUNITY AND RESPOND TO THE GENEROUS AMERICAN OFFER BUT NOTHING LIKE THAT HAPPENED. TALKING TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE SECURITY AND STRATEGIC FIELD, ONE CAN, AT TIMES, SENSE THE INGNORANCE, THE NAIVETE OR THE TWISTED THINKING IN MANY OF THEM WHEN IT COMES TO THE CHARACTER, NATURE, INGREDIENTS AND METHODS OF THE PLO..."
ZARAI MAKES THE ACCUSATION THAT THE "PRO-ARAB OFFICIALS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, THE PENTAGON AND ELSEWHERE ARE HELPING, IF INDIRECTLY, THE RELENTLESS EFFORTS TO LEAD THE ADMINISTRATION ASTRAY. IT IS ALSO DOUBTFUL THAT ISRAEL HAS DONE OR IS DOING ENOUGH TO CORRECT THE DISTORTED AMERICAN THINKING ON THE MATTER..."
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